



Australian Bureau of Statistics

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Summary

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A View From The Top

A View From The Top From the Regional Director

Last month I had a long conversation with the administrator of an aboriginal community in the north of the state about the National Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Social Survey (NATSISS). His community had been randomly selected to participate in the survey and his elders were not feeling particularly cooperative. The survey obtains information from about 10,000 Indigenous people around Australia and provides invaluable data on a range of social issues facing our Indigenous population today.

This administrator suggested that they had been chosen because they are a well run community. He said that they had seen a procession of Commonwealth and State bureaucrats over the last 2 years to collect data and asked why couldn't we just ask them. He pointed out that there was a lot of data taken away but not much given back. He said that despite all of this, nothing much had changed and that answering our questions wouldn't change this. He made some good points and I took a few lessons away.

- We need to clearly maintain the independence of the ABS from the political process to maintain public confidence in our statistics.
- Government needs to collect and share data more efficiently.
- We need to get information back to the community to help them plan for themselves.
- While we can't guarantee that things will change, we can guarantee that information is

available to make quality, informed decisions.

We would do well to remember these lessons across all areas of statistics.

The NATSISS survey results will be out in mid 2010.

Michael Tindall,
Government Statistician and
ABS Regional Director,
Western Australia

Latest WA Statistics

Latest WA Statistics

	WA	Australia
Population (30 Jun 2007)	2.1m	21.0m
CPI (annual rate, Jun 08)	4.5% (Perth)	4.5%
Merchandise Imports (Jul 2008)	\$2,951m*	\$19,658m*
Merchandise Exports (Jul 2008)	\$7,032m*	\$18,219m*
Unemployment Rate (Aug 08)	3.1%	4.2%

*** Estimates of Merchandise Imports and Exports based on Australian Custom Service records. Figures are not based on a Balance of Payment basis.**

NatStats08

NatStats08

The NatStats08 Conference will provide a unique opportunity for key stakeholders from across government, business and academia to discuss strategies for improving statistics for the nation. The NatStats08 Conference program will address a range of issues regarding national statistics. The focus of the conference will be on measuring progress in Australian society and future information needs. An array of high profile policy and decision makers from across the community have been invited to ensure a varied and exciting program.

The conference program has been designed with policy and decision makers in mind. Hear a range of speakers from overseas organisations, senior staff from government departments from across all jurisdictions, as well as experts from the community and leading academics. The NatStats08 conference will take place in one of Melbourne's premier conference venues, the Crown Promenade, home to the Crown conference centre.

To register your interest in attending the conference: email natstats@con-sol.com or visit www.nss.gov.au/natstats08

Don't Miss out! Limited opportunities for Sponsorship and Exhibition.

Are You Prepared?

Are You Prepared?

Western Australian Statistical Indicators

(cat. no. 1367.5)

Types of emergencies in WA

Most major emergencies in Western Australia are due to natural causes, in particular bushfires, tropical cyclones, storms and associated flooding.

In order to effectively plan for and mitigate the effects of these events on the community, emergency authorities have expressed a need for more information on the overall preparedness of households for emergencies. An important element of the information includes community levels of access to vital communication systems such as portable radios, mobile and landline telephones and the Internet. Information has also been sought on the types of assistance households are most likely to need in the event of an emergency.

Preparedness for Emergencies

A forthcoming article in the September quarter edition of Western Australian Statistical Indicators explores some of these factors and their relationship to households with various regional, demographic and dwelling characteristics. The article draws on data from the 2007 State Supplementary Survey on Community Preparedness for Emergencies (cat. no. 4818.5) and focuses particularly on emergencies that may require evacuation.

Some of the significant findings from the survey were that:

- almost half of all Western Australian households did not have a working portable radio and a third did not have access to the Internet, although almost all had access to either a mobile or landline telephone.
- almost half of all Western Australian households had an exit plan for their dwelling, however only one in ten households had an agreed meeting place following an evacuation.
- the majority of households had access to alternative accommodation following an emergency.
- just over one in ten households, and in particular, those in areas prone to bushfire, were unwilling to evacuate their homes in the case of an emergency. Half of these would prefer to stay and fight a bushfire while just under half wanted to prevent looting and vandalism of their property.
- almost one in five households would require assistance to exit their dwelling in the event of an evacuation, particularly those with young children, the elderly, or persons with disabilities.
- a quarter of all households would require transport assistance and two-thirds would require pets to be evacuated.

The different characteristics of households affected their preparedness to evacuate following an emergency. Among family households, couples with children were least likely to have an

exit plan or an agreed meeting place. These households also needed high levels of assistance in relation to exiting their dwelling, transport and pet evacuation. Persons living alone, households with older people and rental dwellings tended to be most vulnerable with regard to their communication systems, with generally lower proportions having access to the Internet or mobile telephone connections.

Further Information

More details can be found in the feature article, Preparedness for Emergencies and Household Assistance Required, Western Australian Statistical Indicators, September quarter 2008, cat. no. 1367.5. If you have any queries relating to the Western Australian Statistical Indicators publication, call Sue Lee on (08) 9360 5391.

Gas Disruption

Gas Disruption

Stats, Stats, Stats: It's A Gas, Gas, Gas!

WA Gas Supply Disruption

On 3 Jun 2008, a pipeline rupture resulted in an explosion at the Apache Energy Varanus Island facility, Western Australia's second largest natural gas plant. The explosion led to the evacuation of 152 Apache employees from Varanus, a tiny island situated about 100km offshore Karratha, to Chevron's nearby Barrow Island oil production facility and then later to Perth.

As a result of the explosion, WA experienced a reduction of roughly 30% of its regular gas supply during the peak winter months. This impacted directly on a significant number of WA businesses and subsequently flowed on to affect the community and other businesses indirectly related.

The explosion prompted the WA Government to devise an action plan in order to minimise the effects of the incident. WA Premier Alan Carpenter announced a range of initiatives, including accessing gas from alternative gas suppliers and bringing a major coal-fired power station, which was closed for maintenance, back into operation. He also asked householders to be mindful of their electricity and gas use, saying that the energy saved through more efficient residential use could be diverted to industries in need.

Assessing the Impact

Despite the known immediate effects caused by the incident, the WA government was in need of a greater, more in-depth level of information to fully understand the impact on businesses and the community.

The collection of relevant, accurate and timely information was needed to assist the Government in making informed decisions in relation to the gas supply disruption.

The ABS was requested to offer assistance to the Government in relation to measuring the economic impact of the domestic gas supply disruption. The assistance principally consisted of the ABS becoming a member of the Gas Supply Disruption Recovery Group, as well as the provision of an outposted ABS officer within the Department of the Premier and Cabinet (DPC) to coordinate statistical advice.

The outposted Officer, Greg Hilton, said "it was impressive to see how the various government agencies and the business community were able to work together to ensure that information was made available to assess the situation."

Outpostings

Greg's outposting at the DPC is not the first time that the ABS has been requested to assist other bodies. Recently, the ABS has positioned officers the Institute of Child Health Research, the Department of Industry and Resources, the Department of Housing and Works and the Department of Sport and Recreation to name a few.

A rise in the popularity of ABS outpostings has resulted from the increased recognition of the benefits that statistics can have when people are seeking to formulate evidence based policies.

ABS outposting programs are tailored to suit the needs of the agency within which the ABS officers have been deployed. They can be best utilised if an agency has a specific project or strategy that requires informed decision making needing statistical reinforcement.

If you are considering the use of an ABS outposted officer or would like further information about ABS outpostings, please contact Wavne Ridders on (08) 9360 5385.

Minute By Minute

Minute By Minute

How Australians Spend Their Time

The television drama series '24' depicts the adventures of fictional counter terrorist agent Jack Bauer in real time, with each minute of the program corresponding to a minute in the characters' lives. But what if the lives of ordinary Australians were depicted minute by minute? In effect, that's what the ABS did earlier this year by tracking the activities of Australians and what they did over a 24-hour period.

If you're an average Australian, you might be surprised to find out exactly how you spend your time over the course of a day. That's because you're likely to spend nearly half the day either sleeping or on personal care; more time on recreation and leisure than working; and more time shopping than on childcare.

And, as many women might have suspected, the survey shows they're doing three times as much housework as their male counterparts, and mums are spending almost three times as much time as dads looking after the kids. But it's not as if the blokes are all sitting on the couch, watching the footy; the survey shows they spend more time than women on chores involving home maintenance and caring for both grounds and animals.

The latest Time Use Survey carried out by the ABS looked at the primary activities carried out by Australians aged 15 and over during a 24-hour period in 2006. It found that they spend:

- 10 hours and 57 minutes on personal care (including 8:31 sleeping)
- 4 hours and 13 minutes on recreation and leisure (including 2:20 on audio/visual media)
- 3 hours and 27 minutes on employment-related activities
- 2 hours and 15 minutes on domestic duties

- 48 minutes purchasing goods and services
- 43 minutes on social and community interaction
- 41 minutes on childcare
- 30 minutes on education
- 19 minutes on voluntary work and care, and
- 7 minutes of the day lost in the statistician's catch-all "undescribed" category.

How men and women spend their time differently

The survey shows that people spend their time differently, and often the difference is gender based. For instance, the survey shows that females spend about 25 per cent more time than males on personal hygiene.

And when it comes to work, males spend almost twice as long engaged in paid employment than women, and twice as long getting to and from work. But it's in the area of domestic activities where the largest discrepancies occur. Women spend an average of 2 hours and 52 minutes a day on domestic activities, compared to the 1 hour and 37 minutes of men.

But perhaps men are beginning to get the message about housework.

Over the past 14 years ABS Time Use Surveys have shown that the huge differences between the time males and females spend on housework have narrowed slightly.

The 1992 Time Use Survey estimated males spent only 37 minutes per day on housework, compared to women's 2 hours and 27 minutes. By 1997, this had become 40 minutes for men, and 2 hours and 19 minutes for women.

But, back to 2006 figures. Males did spend more time than females on "other" housework such as grounds and home maintenance, but this only clawed back 10 minutes of the 1 hour 15 minute total housework difference. Females also spent more time on childcare (59 minutes compared to 22 minutes), more on purchasing goods and services (58 minutes compared to 38 minutes), and extra on voluntary work and care (24 minutes to 15 minutes). Males spent more time on recreation and leisure (4 hours and 29 minutes, compared to 3 hours and 57 minutes). While males spent more time engaging in the physical aspects of recreation and leisure, such as sport and games, females devoted more time to reading and talking.

Between the 1997 and 2006 Time Use Surveys, the time females spent on laundry and clothes care fell by 4 minutes a day, about the time it takes to iron a shirt. Over that same period, the time males spent on laundry and clothes remained unchanged. This suggests there were a lot of males going around in wrinkled shirts in 2006.

International comparisons

Australia is not the only country to conduct time use surveys. The USA, UK, NZ, Canada and others conduct similar surveys that show, among other things, differences in the time that people sleep each day.

Comparisons show that while Australians spend 8 hours and 31 minutes per day sleeping, Britons spend only 8 hours and 11 minutes, while Americans are curled up asleep for 8 hours and 57 minutes.

What people get up to on their weekends

On weekends, there are predictable rises in both time spent sleeping, and time spent in social and recreational activities. Sunday is the big day for these activities, with males indulging in both activities more than females. Males sleep an extra 1 hour and 15 minutes on Sundays compared to weekdays, along with an extra 1 hour and 33 minutes spent on recreation and leisure.

Further information

If you have the inclination (and perhaps more importantly the time), the full breakdown of results can be obtained from the ABS website (publication 4153.0 – How Australians Use Their Time, 2006).

Phil Smythe,
Assistant Director,
Client Liaison & Information Services,
ABS Western Australia

All Aboard

All Aboard

ABS and IPAA Jump On The Same Train

One of the functions of the Client Liaison area of the WA Office is statistical training. A number of courses are presented each year, looking at statistics from different angles.

The most popular course, and not just because it's free, looks at accessing ABS data from the ABS website. Other courses look at understanding demographic data, making time series simple, making quality informed decisions, turning data into information and using ABS datacubes in SuperTable. Details of these courses are listed on the back page of this publication.

Earlier this year, discussions with the Western Australian branch of the Institute of Public Administration Australia (IPAA) led to an agreement in-principle to collaborate on presenting statistical training.

IPAA

IPAA is an independent, national, professional not-for-profit association working with its members to advance excellence in the public sector. In Western Australia, IPAA provides members with opportunities to learn about the major directions in government and public administration.

Members come from all sectors of government, the private sector, educational institutions and the community, all with a common interest in public sector administration, management and reform.

Agreement was reached between IPAA and the ABS that two statistical training courses would be developed, one aimed at graduates and the other at more experienced staff involved in policy. The first course, Statistics and Their Uses was presented in June this year and was quickly subscribed to. The course introduced participants to the basics of identifying, accessing and using statistics to support informed decision-making. It covered: how to identify what data is needed; what types of data are available; how to assess data for quality and relevancy; how to find and access ABS data; and the fundamentals of good data presentation.

Feedback from the course was positive and a follow up course was organised for October. The Statistics for Policy Writers course went ahead in early September, and again feedback was positive.

This course focussed upon two key elements of the policy cycle 'policy analysis' and 'evaluation'. Designed for those with experience in and knowledge of policy formulation this course provided participants with a means of measuring policy success by way of inputs, processes, outputs or outcomes.

This course looked at ways to identify the research question; identify what data is required to meet a defined need; methods to search for the appropriate data; present the results effectively and; put in place mechanisms to monitor proposed policy.

The ABS and IPAA are currently in discussions to formalise a statistical training schedule based on these two courses. Joanne Blayney, the Program Development Consultant for IPAA said "The partnership between IPAA WA and the ABS has been a mutually beneficial one".

Partnerships

"IPAA WA has been able to support the ABS with promoting Statistics Courses that contain the expertise and comprehensive knowledge that the ABS is renowned for. It has been valuable to us to be associated with a recognised organisation as the Australian Bureau of Statistics."

The ABS has committed itself to assisting and encouraging informed decision-making, research and discussion within governments and the community. This partnership with IPAA, combined with the suite of training courses already offered in-house, aims to enhance that capability.

Statistical News

Statistical News

Developments in ABS Statistics

Population Projections

Australia's population is set to change substantially over the next 50 years, with around one in four Australians being 65 years or older by 2056, according to the latest population projections released by the ABS on 4 September 2008. These projections are based on a series of assumptions that take into account recent trends in fertility, mortality and migration.

By 2056 Australia's population is projected to increase to between 31 and 43 million people, with around 23% to 25% being 65 years or older. In 2007 Australia's population was 21 million people, with 13% being 65 years or older.

Using the Series B assumptions WA's population is projected to more than double over the same period, from 2.1 million people in 2007 to 4.3 million people in 2056. Further information is available in Population Projections, Australia, 2006–2101 (cat. no. 3222.0).

Updated Regional Profiles

On 28 July 2008, the ABS updated regional information for all Australian states and territories with the release of profiles for regions such as Local Government Areas.

There are profiles for over 2,000 regions across Australia, covering a range of social and economic information for the years 2002 to 2006. The regional profiles now include additional information not available in previous releases, including the number of businesses by industry, agricultural commodities produced, the number and types of motor vehicles registered, and type of access to the internet.

To access the regional profiles, select the 'National Regional Profile' link under the Regional Statistics heading on the grey menu bar on the left of the ABS home page.

Australian Social Trends

On 23 July 2008, the ABS released Australian Social Trends 2008 (cat. no. 4102.0), which presents statistical analysis and commentary on a variety of current social issues. Each chapter is supported by a set of summary tables including key social indicators which provide an overview of social change over the past decade, including how social conditions differ across Australian states and territories, as well as international comparisons.

The following broad areas of interest are covered: population; family and community; health; education and training; work; economic resources; and housing, as well as a chapter of articles covering other areas of social concern (including an article on Towns of the Mineral Boom).

Perspectives on Migrants

Perspectives on Migrants (cat. no. 3416.0), predominantly utilises data from the 2006 Census of Population and Housing. The publication was released on 20 August 2008 and includes three articles focussing on people born in China and India, people born in Africa and people born in the Middle East.

The articles examine areas of interest such as net overseas migration, year of arrival, visa category, income, labour force status, age and sex, education, ancestry, religious affiliation and English proficiency.

Homelessness in Australia

On Census night in 2006, the homeless population in Australia was 105,000, according to an academic report released by the ABS on 4 September 2008. Counting the Homeless, 2006 (cat. no. 2050.0) found that absolute homelessness, such as sleeping out or in an improvised shelter, accounted for 16% of homelessness in Australia.

In 2006, more than two-thirds (67%) of the homeless population were adults over 18 years of age, with 12% under 12 years of age, and 21% from 12 to 18 years old. Less than half (44%) of homeless people were female.

Client Liaison

Client Liaison

Summary of Events

Bizlinks Success

On July 30 2008, the ABS was involved in the first 'All-of-Government' Bizlinks seminar, an initiative designed to assist small businesses during the initial stages of their start-up or development.

The participants of the seminar watched presentations by a variety of Government organisations, covering topics such as market and industry research, the Trade Practices Act, attraction and retention of staff, tax requirements and different revenue obligations. Participants also received a complimentary information pack that contained additional material beneficial to the operation of small businesses.

Due to positive feedback from participants, the seminars will be held more frequently. Contact Bodi Ledwij on 08 9360 5125 for more details.

Dowerin Field Day

The ABS visited the Dowerin Field Day again this year, sharing a Marquee with other members of the Government Business Information Network, including the ATO, Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade and the State Library of WA.

This proved a great opportunity for all concerned. Despite, or perhaps because of, the ATO presence there were many visitors to the booth. Early on the first day, which was very wet, we were also visited by a freshly shorn, slightly panicked sheep sliding through the entrance and creating mayhem before being captured and returned to his home.

Visitors to the ABS representative showed interest in a wide variety of topics especially the 2006 Census of Population and Housing and the 2005 - 2006 Agricultural Census.

Special Project

The Information Skills Program (ISP) has been devised to increase the awareness and use of data and information disseminated by the Australian Bureau of Statistics. The ISP Consultant in Western Australia, Margaret Garner, presents free seminars at the ABS Offices or she can also run the seminar in your organisation.

ISP members from all state and territories recently gathered to discuss their Forward Work Program and the best ways to improve Statistical Literacy in the community.

If you are interested in accessing these free seminars please contact Margaret Garner on 08 9360 5127.

Sizzling Statistics

Sizzling Statistics

From the recently released Australian Social Trends (ABS Cat no. 4102.0)

Risky Drinking

For 18 to 24 year olds, WA recorded the highest state rate of risky drinkers (20%) of all the states, with the national figure at 15% (2004-05). Risky drinking is defined as seven or more standard drinks in one day for males and five or more for females.

Public Transport

The proportion of Perth adults using public transport for their usual trip to work or study rose only marginally (2%) between 1996 and 2006 Transport Use surveys. In 2006 11% of adults in Perth used public transport. This figure was lower than the national figure of 13%.

Literacy

In 2006, 60% of people in WA were recorded with an adequate or better prose literacy skills.

This was marginally above the national figure (59%) but behind the ACT (71%).

Labour Force

WA males aged 55 to 64 had the nation's highest labour force participation rate (73%) in 2006, well above the national figure of 68%. By comparison, 61% of Tasmanian males aged 55-64 participated in the labour force. While older WA men were active in the labour force similarly aged WA women had a participation rate of 51%, slightly above the Australian figure of 48%.

Weekly Income

Women's share of total gross personal weekly income for Western Australia in 2005-06 was 35%, the lowest of any state or territory. This may be due to the high wages being paid in traditionally male dominated industries such as mining and construction.

First Home Buyers

The average mortgage of WA first home buyers in 2005-06 was \$176,900, roughly 30% less than New South Wales first home buyers (\$248,800).

ABS Statistical Training

ABS Training

Statistical Skills for Better Decision-Making

Free ABS Training:

Accessing ABS Information

Call Marg Garner on (08) 9360 5172

This FREE 2 hour training seminar can be tailored to new or existing users of the ABS Website, and is available to the whole community.

This seminar will increase participants' ability to access ABS information, including the wealth of free data available on the ABS website. It will also introduce participants to the range of ABS services and help available.

Course outcomes - This seminar will:

- raise awareness of the broad range of content on the ABS Website.
- enable participants to browse, search and retrieve a range of information from the ABS Website.
- identify where to find ABS services and help.

This seminar is designed for users who want a broad overview of the ABS Website, as well as search strategies for accessing FREE data available from the Website.

Understanding Demographic Data

This one-day course provides an understanding of the ABS Demographic Data Framework and processes which shape the population. The course includes practical exercises in the analysis of demographic data.

People who use ABS demographic statistics, either to write reports or prepare policy recommendations, at the end of the course will be able to:

- understand the demographic data framework
- understand processes which shape the population
- analyse basic demographic data.

Date: 18 November 2008

Venue: Level 15, Exchange Plaza

2 The Esplanade, Perth

Cost: \$450

Registrations: (08) 9360 5205

Recent Releases

Recent Releases

Publications of Interest

Publication Title	ABS Catalogue Number
Western Australian Statistical Indicators, Jun 08	1367.5
Population Projections, Australia, 2006 to 2101	3222.0
Divorces, Australia, 2007	3307.0.55.001
Perspectives on Migrants, 2008	3416.0
Australian Social Trends, 2008	4102.0
Crime and Justice News, 2008	4500.0
Water Use on Australian Farms, 06-07	4618.0
Health of Mature Age Workers in Australia: A Snapshot, 04-05	4837.0.55.001
Balance of Payments & International Investment Position, Aust, Jun 08	5302.0
Lending Finance, Australia, Jul 08	5671.0
Innovation in Australian Business, 06-07	8158.0
Electricity, Gas, Water and Waste Services, Australia, 06-07	8226.0
Sales of Australian Wine and Brandy by Winemakers, Jul 08	8504.0
Tourist Accommodation, Small Area Data, WA, Mar 08	8635.5.55.001
TV, Film & Video Production & Post-Production Services, Aust 06-07	8679.0

About this Release

Stats Talk is a newsletter produced by the Western Australian office of the ABS. It provides information about new developments, publications, seminars, training and reviews

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